

Shelley Cohn Presentation to Appropriations Committee, January 25, 2005
Representative Boone and members of the committee.

It is a pleasure to be here to talk about the state's investment in the arts through the Arizona Commission on the Arts.

I would also like to voice my appreciation for the JLBC recommendation; we recognize there are still fiscal issues to deal with in the state and appreciate your vote of confidence in our work.

As the budget process advances, we want to talk about why OSPB recommended increase is significant to us and our ability to grow our work on behalf of the people of the state.

I want to spend just a few moments discussing what that investment does in communities throughout the state and what future funding increases could mean to the arts. The Arts Commission:

- ?? Connects students and teachers with the arts. We are an active partner with the Department of Education to make sure that all students have access to quality arts education programs. 61% of the projects funded by the Commission have an outreach component to schools. We support schools directly to bring in artists in residence to complement their existing curriculum based programs; we require arts organizations such as the Phoenix Art Museum or Tucson Symphony to provide field trips or take their programs to schools; we support organizations like the Metropolitan Youth Symphony or Phoenix Boys Choir to provide programs after school; and we provide institutes for teachers in rural or underserved areas to learn how to include the arts and the arts standards in their curriculum. Teachers in rural communities such as Bullhead City, Ganado, Morristown, Nogales report positively on the experience of learning; with teachers from all grade levels, experiencing what it is like to learn in a new area. They leave the institutes believing that they can take steps to ingrate the arts into their classrooms and improve the learning for students.
- ?? Invests in the product development of arts organizations to produce and present the programs that are of value for the citizens of the state. These programs are supported in every county of the state. It is the

quality and diversity of these programs that contributes to making Arizona a place for new business and business expansion and cultural tourism.

?? Helps arts organizations become better businesses; through training, consultation and professional development opportunities in strategic planning, financial planning, marketing, fundraising and program development. The Tucson Arizona Boys Chorus credits this program with helping them solve management problems and raised the organization and its board of directors to a new level of responsibility and national recognition. These programs focus on smart business practices that lead to better service to their communities, better quality product and more stable businesses.

Over 500 of your constituents will be here on February 7 to talk with you directly about the impact of state arts funding in their communities. They represent each and every legislative district in Arizona and they will give you specific insight of how state funding makes a difference in your home communities.

One thought in closing. I have shared with you the ways that the state's investment in the arts supports a quality education for students; contributes to a quality of life in our communities that is attractive to business and employees wanting to live here; a component of a healthy tourism sector.

The arts themselves are important as a unique form of communication that has the capacity to generate fresh insights and to make those insights tangible to others. America's incredible creativity is one part of the many things that set us apart from the rest of the world. Your investment assures that we both prepare the creative thinkers of tomorrow and retain creative thinkers who want to live here

Thank you for your consideration of the state's modest but vital contribution that makes a difference in the lives of the citizens who live here.